

DIVERSE IMAGINATION OF ART INTERVENING COMMUNITY –A DISCOURSE ON ARTISTIC REALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The core of thought for college education reformation of recent years is to provide what type of learning for students to acquire necessary knowledge and ability in this practical world. Scholar B. E. Suchman indicated the thinking activities of human daily lives generated from culture, which was situational and knowledge had to be interpreted in derivative and applied situations for significance. Moreover, the issues of art and public domain are getting more and more concern nowadays in Taiwan. Nevertheless, concepts like openness of art, cultural and creative industry and citizenship aesthetics all focus on artistic learning and perception, which is a comprehension for living. The researcher deems specialty development is more emphasized and artistic and human cultivation is mostly limited to a general knowledge course in higher education. Therefore, in the researcher's opinion, how to internalize college students' power for artistic realization in the present higher art education is something to be considered.

Accordingly, a group of aspiring art volunteers and teachers that love their communities formed a Dandelion Family in this research with a view to developing the spirit of college minor revolution by entering communities through artistic activities to create more issues like land, community industry and green ecology, etc. for concern. As a result, the objectives of this research are: (1) to summarize practical steps specifically by analyzing the process of college students intervening communities via art; and (2) to develop feasible projects of art intervening communities through spontaneity of college students. The strategies of action learning and case study were applied in this research. The domain for study was the Chuehtou Community nearby the school and the duration of study was about half a year. The results of the research are: (1) five practical steps for art intervening communities via innovative realization of higher education consist of the woodpecker diagnosis stage – to discover and analyze problems, the bee division of labor stage – to make up an action learning team, the lion king leadership stage – to introduce promoters, the buffalo rumination stage – to reflect, the otter engineer stage – to put into action and the owl meditation stage – to diagnose the learning process; and (2) four feasible projects of art intervening communities via innovative realization of higher education include Exploring the land – to create a micro-trip, Discovering happiness – to create a micro-experience, Action of opening the treasure box – to create a micro-touch and Sharing with people – to create a micro-forum.

KEYWORDS: College Minor Revolution, Higher Art Education, Art Intervening Communities, Artistic Realization

INTRODUCTION

Art has to go out without being limited to the role of a space for an art museum. For openness of art, every kind of people should be allowed to choose themes or present exhibitions and displays. Meanwhile, more concerns for social issues and disadvantaged minorities (old people, women, teenagers) need to be focused. It is expected the elitist art can be

overthrown and the yuppie theory of taste promoted by art can be stopped. Instead, people should truly touch with art and art should be more emphasized on the relationship between land and people. Moreover, art should be incorporated to events, objects, forms, models, space, places and people to constitute themes for mutual dialogues and connection. The core of thinking on college education reformation for recent years is what type of learning students need to obtain necessary knowledge and ability in this real world (Ministry of Education, 2006). Scholar B. E. Suchman indicated the thinking activities of human daily lives generated from culture, which was situational (quoted from Mayer, 1992). Knowledge had to be interpreted in derivative and applied situations for significance (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989). S. Papert (1996) also deemed though memories and practice were the basic ways of applying knowledge, emphasis on problem solving capabilities in contexts was the foundation of getting new knowledge for life learning. Consequently, living contexts need to be focused for learning and the problems in the real world should be started with to interweave an interactive learning scenario with life. In this way, knowledge can be internalized to become a mobile ability.

Few scholars present systematic studies on general art education in higher education. Fang-cheng Wu (1996) indicated in his study on general art education in college that the general art course in colleges was mostly limited to appreciation. Shiu-chu Hsu and Shiu-wen Huang (2004) considered students expected to acquire the capacities of operation and creation from the general art course, which were followed by the abilities of appreciation, criticism and art application. Yung-shien Chen (2005) also thought lots of hands-on teaching materials in the art education curriculum not only motivated students to learn through practice or skill training, but also rendered to the effect of learning by analogy. It's not hard to discover from the researches of the aforementioned scholars that since art appreciation is mainly focused in national general art education, creation-oriented contents need to be more emphasized instead (Fang-cheng Wu, 1996, Shiu-chu Hsu and Shiu-wen Huang, 2004, Yung-shien Chen, 2005). Nevertheless, both creation and appreciation are very important core abilities in art education. As P. Duncum (1999) said, a great quantity of rich and fast changing visual messages in our daily life had already dominated the ways we looked at things. Therefore, we should never ignore the visual art experiences and their power. Art educators need to study visual culture art in daily life and stress prompt participation of aesthetics of living. As for higher art education, the researcher is not only concerned about the contents of creation or appreciation, but how art educators apply what type of activities and strategies to help college students to internalize art learning and become performers of cultural art (Tun-ju Liao, 2009).

Accordingly, a group of aspiring art volunteers and teachers that love their communities formed a Dandelion Family in this research with a view to developing the spirit of college minor revolution by entering communities through artistic activities. In other words, art may be just a medium or method in our revolution and what we expect is more issues like love for the land, community industry and green ecology, etc. can be fully presented through art. It is hoped students and people of the community have an in-depth understanding of the living space and environment around them via artistic activities. The strategies of action learning and case study were applied in this research. The domain for preliminary study was the Chuehtou Community nearby the school and the duration of study was about half a year. The objectives of this research are:

To Summarize Practical Steps Specifically by Analyzing the Process of College Students Intervening Communities Via Art; And

To Develop Feasible Projects of Art Intervening Communities Through Spontaneity of College Students

CORE ISSUES OF ARTISTIC REALIZATION

Community Care

A community is a basic unit of human life. The influence and intervention of modernization not only change the original lifestyle but also reduce the traditional cultural tone. Consequently, our team wishes to enter the community and the field to create more subjects via the concept of root searching and art activities so that the outsiders may know the beauty and charisma of the land.

Declined Industries

Every local community has its own rich agricultural resources such as coffee, peanuts, pickles, pineapples and a variety of flowers and so on. Almost each village has a characteristic specialty and the green industry is everywhere. Every farm produce becomes a representative image of each town. As a result, we hope to guide people to rediscover the value of their community industry and to think about all possibilities of adding values to their local industry.

Green Environment

We hope to convey the ideas of environmental education and land protection via thematic activities like lectures on fun of nature, the green fingers workshop, ecological investigations and green life maps so that more people may become concerned about the environment, land, history and culture of their homeland. We not only spread artistic seeds, but also disseminate the concept of green ecology and eco-lifestyle through motivating parents and their children in the community and miscellaneous workshops.

Action Aesthetics

In terms of the action plan for community aesthetics, the historical idea of memories was applied to help people of the community to find out and tell their own stories, express their love for the land and develop their identity with the local culture via artistic creation.

ARTISTIC REALIZATION – METHODS AND STEPS

Cohesion of a Common View: to form an Art Team

Team Introduction

“Art Dandelion – to the power of N” is the name of the team. It is expected the spirit and power of this team are like the little seeds of a dandelion that are blown about in the wind and bloom everywhere. To the power of N is a mathematical term that means to time itself several times. For instance, two to the power of three is eight, i.e. two times two for three times ($2 \times 2 \times 2 = 8$). It implies the multiplier and infinite power, which also stands for the spirit of the team.

Team Interaction

This team is a cross-domain and interdisciplinary organization with students from diverse backgrounds and teachers of extremely different specialties. College students play a major role in this project and teachers merely act as a go-between and motivator. Hence, the core idea of dealing with all questions is based on 5W1H for resolution and disposition.

A. Why – why to do it? Reasons and causes.

B.How – how to do it? Division of labor and carrying out.

C.What – what are the core value and concept to do it?

D.Which – what are the strategies and methods?

F.E.When – what time?

G.Where – what place?

Design of Art Activities: Let Art Go into Community

Exploring the Land – To Create a Micro-Trip

Shooting of micro-films, making of green maps and setting up of community picture books are included. It is expected communities can be marketed in creative ways from the perspective of college students and a rush for taking a trip to the countryside for backpackers and the young generation can be created.

Discovering Happiness – To Create a Micro-Experience

Training of community art reporters on static design and dynamic picture shooting is included. We hope college students can look for the stories and memories belonging to the community exclusively and make them into touching art reports.

Action of Opening the Treasure Box – To Create a Micro-Touch

This action constitutes “people-oriented extension – setting up sense of community / an explanation meeting on consensus of community residents,” “object-oriented extension – ecology workshops obtaining material from local sources,” and “landscape-oriented extension – art creation workshops of specific art actions.” The team makes the community residents cohere through various workshops and digs out the possibility of regenerating the industry.

Sharing with People – To Create a Micro-Forum

Setting up an FB platform and publishing an e-paper are included. The team expects to create enthusiastic discussions and film downloading via this information platform.

Planning of Implementation Steps: To Make Art Intervention More Strategic

Action learning will be applied to the specific execution steps of this project. R. Revans (1980) indicated action learning developed questioning insights in a group according to the existing things in the real world and he proposed the formula of $L = P + Q$ as a model for action learning (quoted from the translation of Hung-cheng Huang & Yung-kai Liao, 2003). L represents learning; P refers to programmed knowledge that may come from experts or books for problem solving and Q stands for questioning to search for helpful resolutions and make action plans for complex problem solving. However, there are plenty of reflections involved in the process of action learning and the learners need to amend their own thinking continuously during the process (quoted from the translation of Yung-lung Huang & Shu Chia, 2001). A reflection means to look back, think about and explore the core of the question during a periodic cycle. As a result, K.Weinstein (1995) changed this model into $L = P + Q + A + R$ (quoted from the translation of Yung-lung Huang & Shu Chia, 2001), in which A means action; i.e. to put knowledge and thoughts into action and R refers to reflection; i.e. learners review the performance of the implemented project. Six execution steps of this project are summarized as follows and each step will

be served as a reference of reflection in the future.

The Woodpecker Diagnosis Stage – To Discover and Analyze Problems

Action learning focuses on a certain problem, project, challenge, issue or task and the problem has to be significant and urgent. Thus, the Dandelion Family walked into, investigated and discovered communities and analyzed their problems.

The Bee Division of Labor Stage – To Make Up an Action Learning Team

The core of action learning is the action learning team, which is usually composed of four to eight people from different backgrounds. It helps the team to look at the problems from different angles and provide creative viewpoints for the best solutions. Therefore, the Dandelion Family has teachers and students from different departments and specialties for brainstorming.

The Lion King Leadership Stage – To Introduce Promoters

There is a promoter in an action learning team, whose major tasks are to ensure the operation of the team and help the members in learning. Hence, the leader of the Dandelion Family is a student who leads other art-loving college students and acts as a critically important revolutionary leader of the team.

The Buffalo Rumination Stage – To Reflect

Reflection is very important for learners because it helps people to be aware of the things about and around them. Reflection is also a very important learning process for the team members during action. Consequently, the Dandelion Family holds irregular meetings to discuss the defects or effects of actions for improvement.

The Otter Engineer Stage – To Put into Action

The members of the action learning team need to be active. If the team doesn't act and reflect, there will be no true learning. The Dandelion Family emphasizes the interactions with the cultural and historical people and investigations of the literature and art resources of the communities. Practical actions are required and reflections are added during action for a better understanding of the community culture.

The Owl Meditation Stage – To Diagnose the Learning Process

Action learning is based on a complete learning cycle. In other words, inquiry, reflection, planning, action and second reflection are included in the learning process to review self learning experiences. At least ten times of interactive discussions among the family members are planned, which is a type of reflection as well as a process of reviewing self learning.

REALIZATION PERFORMANCE OF COMMUNITY ART

Introduction of Chuehtou Community

Chuehtou is a typical rural village that mainly grows peanuts, garlic and rice. Plenty of local residents are engaged in towel processing for the past few years. The major group in the community is people from southern Fukien Province. Chuehtou Community is characterized with Kutingben, a large round barn with a diameter of ten meters and a height of about ten meters. Square windows or doors were available to store grain. It is shaped like a conical straw hat and becomes

a feature of the community. There are 298 households and 969 people at the moment; however, as young people are moving out, the aged become more. Since community development is greatly promoted in villages recently, the team hopes to help community members to do their parts and develop their community cohesiveness.

Practical Implementation

A detailed explanation of practical implementation is limited to the space as data are huge. You may check “Art Dandelion – to the power of N” at FB for details. A brief summary is as follows:

EXPLORING THE LAND – TO CREATE A MICRO-TRIP

A. Making of Bike Maps

Maps were made for tourists to appreciate the community by riding bikes. Refer to Fig. 1.



Figure 1: Design of Guide Map

B. Shooting of Micro-Films

The domain is based on the community for people to discover the beauty of it. Characteristics of the community were incorporated into script design so that the viewers may experience the peculiar village scenery and the stories through films. Refer to Table 1.



Table 1: Parts of Community Micro-Films

	
<p>Kutingben of Chuehtou Community incorporated into the script</p>	<p>Community industry incorporated into the script – Cultural Museum of Towels</p>

Discovering Happiness – To Create a Micro-Experience

The community residents may understand more about the things around them through the workshops. The community was practically investigated and the plant industry as well as the plants of the community were made known via the handmade soap workshop. The local residents not only truly know about their hometown, but also apply a great amount of cinnamons to develop organic handmade soaps. See Table 3.

Table 3: Pictures of Handmade Soap Workshop

	
<p>Parents and their children experienced making of handmade soaps together at night.</p>	<p>Teachers of National Formosa University taught the residents how to make handmade soaps.</p>

ACTION OF OPENING THE TREASURE BOX – TO CREATE A MICRO-TOUCH

A. Art Weekly

Several art reporters were assigned to explore stories of the community on a weekly basis, wrote down special events and presented them with words and pictures. See Table 4.



Table 4: Layouts of Art Weekly

	
<p>Students interviewed and reported industrial stories of the community.</p>	<p>Students excavated stories of famous spots in the community.</p>

B. Picture Books of chuehtou Community

Students presented the beautiful scenery and stories of the community with picture books through interactions with the local residents and every page has its own story. See Table 5.



Table 5: Layouts of Community Picture Books

	
<p>Kutingben, the feature of the community, was served as the background of the picture book.</p>	<p>Viewers were guided to understand the community with initiation of stories.</p>

C. Community Wall Painting

Students and the local residents were drawn together through the activity of painting walls. A highlight of the community was established by creating large wall paintings. See Table 6.

Table 6: Pictures of Large Community Wall Paintings

	
Waste Kutingbens were turned into a scenic spot of the community.	Six large wall paintings created a highlight for the community.

Sharing With People – To Createa Micro-Forum

A. Establishment of an Fb Group

A web page of “Art Dandelion – to the power of N” was established to share the findings of the art reporters on a weekly basis. The true color of each individual was also recorded by films. Dribs and drabs of the community are shared with the fans. The local residents may also see their accomplishments through the agitations of the college students.

B. After-School Visits of Art Volunteers

Diversified artistic visits to the communities were also planned by the team with a view to creating a space for dialogues via inspections and emulations. Successful operation of other communities may be understood so as to know how to apply creativity to run his/her own community.

IMPLEMENTATION ACHIEVEMENTS

Community Practice: To Experience Localized Community Aesthetics of Living

The team helped the community to develop an artistic outlook of cultural features through the interdisciplinary capabilities. Thanks to this cross-domain and interdisciplinary organization, each student and teacher has his/her own specialty background and brainstorming on a specific issue renders to a different or creative action model easily. Therefore, the art plan based on the issues of community, industry and ecology is a complete idea, including an identification and understanding of culture, history, resources and the ecological system with plenty of critical thoughts involved. We believe teamwork and the creative initiation of the students may bring a brand new outlook and opportunity to the passing and declining industry. In this way, the artistic landscape of the local town can be created and the attitude and capabilities towards the local life will be activated.

Team Growth: To Develop Awareness of Action/Citizenship Aesthetics for Students

The development model for realizing the dream step by step can increase the power of the creative team. Our team was active in planning a proper route for cultural exploration and promoting cultural aesthetic experiences of excellent quality in a practical way. Students’ aesthetic consciousness may be awakened through latent cultural nurture and internalized to become a civil responsibility by perceiving the external environment. We hope the creative capabilities of the team are divergent and the diverging effect of each individual in the team may help more people to know the operation model and ideas of the team. The existing artistic and cultural resources and human landscapes are connected through practical actions so that students may put themselves into cultural grounding tasks and citizenship aesthetics can truly

become a movement that all people are concerned about and happy to participate.

Students' Growth: To Become Doers and Performers of Social and Human Concerns

Action learning step by step may develop the ability of an action research for participant students. The role played by students of this project is extremely important and the teachers only act as a promoter and a guide. The teachers spread the core spirit and knowledge learning through activities and the students are in the front-line for practicing. As a result, there might have some problems and difficulties that need to be overcome during the process and the confronting challenges in particular are the problems of this real world that can't be learned outside class. Students have to experience and try from the sequential realization process to learn how to solve problems and convert their abilities efficiently. As the procedures of action learning were applied by the team, students would acquire experiential and problem solving learning and face the real problems of a community, instead of virtual statuses in books. It is a specific learning experience that can only get from peer discussion and action. Consequently, the team expects every participant student can develop his/her research ability for action learning, which will be another revolutionary spirit for them to look at this world and lead the society.

CONCLUSIONS

Five Practical Steps for Art Intervening Communities Via Innovative Realization of Higher Education Consist of the Woodpecker Diagnosis Stage – To Discover and Analyze Problems, the Bee Division of Labor Stage – To Make Up an Action Learning Team, the Lion King Leadership Stage – To Introduce Promoters, the Buffalo Rumination Stage – To Reflect, the Otter Engineer Stage – To Put into Action and the Owl Meditation Stage – To Diagnose the Learning Process.

The specific implementation steps for artistic realization in this project utilize the strategy of action learning to make artistic realization more theoretical. Six steps are divided during the process and they are named by the attributes of the animals so that students may have an in-depth understanding of the feature of each step. These steps include: learners are arranged to solve a real problem; team members discuss and analyze problems; team members collect and share relevant information; team members produce possible solutions; team members present problem reports and learning evaluations and reflections. A brief summary is described as follows:

A. The woodpecker diagnosis stage – to discover and analyze problems: the Dandelion Family walked into, investigated and discovered communities and analyzed their problems.

B. The bee division of labor stage – to make up an action learning team: the Dandelion Family has teachers and students from different departments and specialties for brainstorming.

C. The lion king leadership stage – to introduce promoters: the leader of the Dandelion Family is the captain of art and culture volunteers, who acts as a critically important revolutionary leader of the team.

D. The buffalo rumination stage – to reflect: the Dandelion Family holds irregular meetings to discuss the defects or effects of actions for improvement.

E. The otter engineer stage – to put into action: the Dandelion Family emphasizes the interactions with the cultural and historical people of the communities and reflections on actions result in a better understanding of the community culture.

F. The owl meditation stage – to diagnose the learning process: several times of interactive discussions among the family members are planned to review the self learning process.

Four Feasible Projects of Art Intervening Communities Via Innovative Realization of Higher Education Include Exploring the Land – To Create a Micro-Trip, Discovering Happiness – To Create a Micro-Experience, Action of Opening the Treasure Box – To Create a Micro-Touch And Sharing with People – To Create a Micro-forum.

The activity we promote is called EDAS, which means exploring, discovering, action and sharing. These four words represent four stages, four meanings and four processes. The team will design and plan package activities for each process to put the idea of each stage into practice. The team has accomplished one micro-film, one documentary film, eight weekly art videos (uploaded to YUTO), one volume of 54 weekly art reports with words and pictures (edited to an e-book), 16 weekly art paintings, one community picture book and one guide map, etc. Each of these four stages has its own specific activities, which are summarized as the following:

A. Exploring the land – to create a micro-trip: students go into the community to lead the local people to investigate the characteristics of the community and these investigations include people, culture, landscape, scenery and industry to create a rush for taking a trip to the countryside for backpackers and the young generation.

B. Discovering happiness – to create a micro-experience: workshops are held for students and local people to learn the stories of discovering happiness, ecology, industry, touch and culture.

C. Action of opening the treasure box – to create a micro-touch: artistic practice includes “people-oriented extension – setting up sense of community / an explanation meeting on consensus of community residents,” “object-oriented extension – approach of obtaining material from local sources / green finger ecology workshops,” and “landscape-oriented extension – specific art actions.” The team makes the community residents cohere through various activities and digs out the possibility of regenerating the industry.

D. Sharing with people – to create a micro-forum: setting up an FB platform and publishing an e-paper (collaborating with now news) are included. The team expects to create enthusiastic discussions and film downloading via this network platform. The major task of sharing with people is to motivate concerns and discussions from young people through creating topics.

Suggestions

Higher Education Should Stress Human Exploration and Allow College Students to Experience the Community And Create Aesthetics of Living.

Aesthetic economy has become a global trend nowadays and aesthetic elements are strikingly used to create visual images and perceptions either in local or community industries or even articles of daily lives. We are in a time of cultural consumption and aesthetic experience. For university students that are closely correlated to industrial development and employment environment, the purpose of art learning is to cultivate them to become practitioners of living art. Practice is designed in this project to represent the common memories of the community in the manners of cultural preservation, environmental restoration, community green fingers and artistic activation so that college students can voice and act out their concerns and shaping of a living space. Systematic planning, recording, reflecting and re-amending in activities can truly develop students' perception and action towards environmental art.

Higher Art Education Should Stress Group Concerns and Propose Possibilities of Innovating Declining Community Industries.

The 21st century is a knowledge-based economic epoch and those that master knowledge can own wealth and competitiveness. Nevertheless, acquisition of knowledge depends on accumulation, proliferation, brainstorming, application and correction. In other words, continuous studying, learning and accumulating experiences are required for knowledge. Action learning is exactly a learning method that emphasizes experiences, which helps students' reflection and integration abilities on knowledge. It is believed that community culture based creative activities and the strategy of action learning develop a brand new model for higher education. In addition to specialty knowledge, college students walk out of school, learn to care about the community, understand the place they live and discover various possibilities of innovating the declining communities.

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